(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have decided to print only Rs. 10/- note at this press;

(d) whether the press is capable to print other denomination notes also; and

(e) if so, the steps taken by the Government to print all denomination notes there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Salboni Press (Phase I) has commenced production from 11-12-96 and so far, it has produced and supplied 30 million notes of Rs. 10 denomination.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Building for phase-II of the Press is getting ready. Machinery for printing all denominations have already been ordered.

ADB Loan for Purchasing Long Term Bonds

1151. SHRI VIJAY PATEL :
SHRI SANAT MEHTA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Asian Development Bank has offered to provide about 300 million dollars for purchasing of long term bonds from private sector infrastructure fund in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Government have received any such offer from the ADB; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the area in which the proposed amount is likely to be invested by way of bonds in the country Statewise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) to (c) Asian Development Bank have approved a loan on 7 November, 1996 for Private Sector Infrastructure Facility (PSIF) Project, totalling US $ 300 million to three Participating Financial Institutions viz., Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India Ltd., ($ 150 m), Industrial Finance Corporation of India Ltd., ($ 100m) and SCICI Ltd., ($ 50m) for onlending to private sector - sponsored infrastructure projects in four sub sectors, viz. power, telecommunications, roads and ports.

The PSIF can be used only to finance debentures or long-term debt securities for the securitized debt issued by infrastructure sub-projects. There is no specific state-wise allocation provided in the loan agreements. The ADB loan has a maturity period of 20 years inclusive of grace period of 5 years.

Indo-Russian Joint Working Group Meeting of Commerce Secretary-Level at Moscow

1152. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether India and Russia have agreed for a package of trade boosting measure before the Moscow visit of Prime Minister to that country;

(b) whether all the issues related to trade between the two countries have been fully considered and agreed upon;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any plan has been finalised during the recent Commerce Secretary-level meeting of the Indo-Russian Joint Working Group in Moscow;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether India had agreed to allow exports of high-technology products; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and to extent upto which India will be benefited?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (e) During the Third Session of the Indo-Russian Working Group on Trade and Economic Cooperation held at Moscow from January 23-27, 1997, led by Commerce Secretary from Indian side, the following important steps/decisions were, inter-alia, taken by the two sides for promotion of bilateral trade :

(i) to broadbase the basket of goods traded between the two countries.

(ii) preparing a scheme for consignment exports to Russia under the debt repayment track for ensuring quick and regular availability of Indian goods in Russia;

(iii) allocation of rupee funds to the experienced Russian organisations in a timely manner;

(iv) Cooperation between insurance agencies of the two countries;

(v) to recommend establishment of a Sub-Group on Financial and Banking Matters under the aegis of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Cooperation; and

(vi) to cooperate in facilitating the establishment of joint ventures in both the countries.

In addition, an agreement was finalised for operation of Joint Shipping Services between the two countries. Accordingly, the Agreement was signed between 'Novoship' and the Shipping Corporation of India on 11.2.97.

(f) and (g) Government of India has reduced the value addition norms from 100% to 75% on export of

certain hitech items from India into Russia using debt repayment funds from Ist January, 1997 with a view to accelerate the bilateral trade in general and hitech items in particular.

Sitting up a Centre in Andhra Pradesh by Spices Board

1153. SHRIMATI SARADA TADIPARTHI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Spices Board proposes to set up a centre for the development of spices in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to impart training to farmers to prevent over usages of pesticides to boost chilly export?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b) Spices Board has a regional office at Hyderabad which is headed by an officer of the rank of Deputy Director. This office, in close coordination with Department of Horticulture, Andhra Pradesh is undertaking activities for the quality improvement, improvement of post harvest practices and development of Spices in Andhra Pradesh.

(c) Some of the steps taken/proposed to be taken to prevent over usage of pesticides to boost chilly exports include :

(i) Introduction of integrated pest management programme in collaboration with Regional Agricultural Research Station (PARS), "LAM, Guntur" to reduce pesticide residue in chilly.

(ii) Conducting programmes in Guntur, Khammam, Warrangal, Karimnagar and Prakasam districts for creation of awareness amongst the chilly growers on quality management and improved post-harvest handling of chillies with emphasis on need based application of pesticides.

(iii) Supply of HDPE sheets at subsidised rates to chilly growers to overcome problem of fungal infestation, resulting in the occurence of afflatoxing in chillies.

Export Growth and Bank's Credit to Exporters

1154. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of export and import growth including Balance of Payment position during Sixth and Seventh Plan period;

(b) the position in view of part (a) above upto December 31, 1996 of the Eighth Plan period;

(c) whether economic liberalisation policy and rupee devaluation time to time during the above period had helped to stabilise India's Balance of Payment position in terms of dollar;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the exporters are facing any problem in view of increase the volume of trade due to Bank's credit restriction, more competition in liberal economy and some other problems; and

(f) if so, the steps taken by the Government to meet the challenge?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b) As per DGCI and S, data, the average annual rate of growth of exports and imports valued in US dollars during the 6th Plan (1980-85), 7th Plan (1985-90) and 8th Plan (1992 to April-Dec. 1996) are as follows :

Plans	Growth Rates (In % age)	
	Export	Import
VI Plan	4.7	6.5
VII Plan	11.6	8.2
VIII Plan (Upto Dec., 1996)	13.9	14.9

As per RBI data, the average level of current account deficit as percentage of GDP is placed at 1.3% for Sixth Plan, 2.2% for Seventh Plan, and at about 1.3% for Eighth Plan.

(c) and (d) The economic liberalisation policies including trade liberalisation and exchange rate policies have helped strengthening India's export base and maintaining export competitiveness abroad besides strengthening balance of payments position.

(e) and (f) Responding to the need for adequate export credit, efforts have been made to provide export credit in rupees and in foreign currency at interest rates linked to LIBOR at pre and post shipment stages. Commercial Banks are required to lend a minimum of 12% of net bank credit to the export sector. Flow of credit to the export sector is being monitored by RBI. The Government is constantly interacting with the RBI to ensure adequate availability of credit to the exporters both in foreign currency and rupee terms at competitive rates.

Incentive to Export Sectors

1155. DR. G.R. SARODE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to announce any incentives to boost export;

(b) if so, the time by which these are likely to be announced; and

(c) the sectors that are likely to be given priority for the export?